

# School Garden Planning



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Think. Learn. **Grow.**

[www.dmschools.org](http://www.dmschools.org)

## Gain Support and Form a Committee

### Required:

- ☐ Principal support
- ☐ Form a garden committee comprised of staff, parents, and other interested community members to help
- ☐ Establish your vision for the gardening program
  - How will garden be used during the school year? Summer? Who will use it?
  - What will you do with the produce? Donations, programming, organized community harvests?

*Involve custodial services*

### Recommended:

- ☐ Visit established school gardens
  - [Eatgreaterdesmoines.org](http://Eatgreaterdesmoines.org) has a searchable database of local school gardens
- ☐ Join the Des Moines School Garden Network Google group to connect with other programs, share resources, and learn best practices
  - <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/des-moines-school-garden-network>
- ☐ Visit the DMPS Farm to School Weebly page  
(coming soon)

## Plan and Design Your Garden

### Required:

- ☐ Create a plan and draw it out
  - Container, raised beds, in-ground planting?
  - Size, dimensions, location?
  - Water source?
  - Who's in charge of maintenance, watering, weeding?
- ☐ Building principal needs to send garden site plan to the DMPS directors of Facility and Custodial Services for approval.
  - Before you dig, you may need to contact Iowa One Call by dialing 811. A minimum of 3 days advance notice is required.

DMPS may be able to provide mulch, top soil, and other resources. All requests should be placed via work order through the building custodian.

### Recommended:

- ☐ Complete a training/planning program
  - ☐ A Garden for Every School (web-based)
  - ☐ School Garden 101 (face-to-face)
- ☐ Choose plants that are appropriate for your garden needs. \*Garden Planting
- ☐ Location
  - Sunlight: At least 6 direct hours per day.
  - Water Source: Garden needs to be located near an outdoor faucet or water source. Rain barrels allowable with approval.
  - Soil Testing: Contact Polk County Extension for more information 515-957-5670.
  - Fencing: Chain-link, wood, or other

**Contact facilities before installing fencing or water source.**









## Secure Start-Up Funds

### Required:

- ☐ Contact the DMPS grants team to explore funding opportunities
- ☐ Contact the accounting to set up a separate account for your school garden program.
- ☐ **Consider ongoing funding/resources**
  - Plants/produce/seeds may be sold to individuals or other programs to raise funds for the garden
  - Save seeds to plant the following year

### Recommended:

- ☐ Reach out to community partners
- ☐ Seek volunteers
- ☐ Request donations



## Plant, Maintain, and Evaluate

### Required:

- ☐ Register garden on [eatgreaterdesmoines.org](http://eatgreaterdesmoines.org)
- ☐ Ensure there is a point person to complete garden care and maintenance tasks each week.
- ☐ Garden beds and surrounding area **must** be cleaned up by October 31. Request a work order through the school custodian to have the plant waste picked up from the site.

The Facilities Department reserves the right to remove any clutter or debris from garden spaces.

### Recommended:

- ☐ Volunteer orientation
- ☐ Plan a planting day in the spring after May 15.
- ☐ Use Garden Tracking Spreadsheet  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1iGtXaN8L3tuKgKBwesM-8Pyz\\_pMluFYadjxDHEPE3P8/edit#gid=2127290258](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1iGtXaN8L3tuKgKBwesM-8Pyz_pMluFYadjxDHEPE3P8/edit#gid=2127290258)
- ☐ Document successes and lessons learned
- ☐ Plan a harvest/clean-up day in the fall before October 31

# DMPS Garden Webpage

**-Choose your garden committee infographic? -FoodCorps**

**-Planting Guide Infographic**

☐ Decide which type of garden best fits your needs

Container Gardens: A great way to pilot a garden project. Containers need to have a sturdy bottom, drainage holes, and be raised off the ground (1-2") to drain properly. Water often.

Raised Beds: Width should not exceed 4 feet. Use untreated lumber, landscape bricks, or other non-toxic material. Landscape fabric will help control weeds at the bottom of the bed.

In-Ground Planting: Inexpensive and immediate. Mark paths and beds clearly. Weed often.

**-Sample garden plans**

**-<http://www.gardeners.com/kitchen-garden-planner/preplanned-gardens>**

**-Link to [Eat Greater DM](#) tracking template**

**-Information on grants that are available**

**-Curriculum resources**

**-Training opportunities**

# WHAT TO PLANT IN YOUR SCHOOL GARDEN

Although it's tempting to plant anything and everything,  
(especially when you're given free seeds!)  
it's important to plan ahead to ensure everyone has a  
positive gardening experience.

Here's a chart to help you  
decide what to plant:

Please note, this is not an all-inclusive list!

## Will you have summer programming?

**NO**  
We will just use the  
garden during the  
school year

I want to  
harvest  
before  
summer  
break

**Spring Crops-**  
Plant these in  
April/May

Lettuce  
Radishes  
Green Onions  
Spinach  
Peas



I want to  
harvest  
after  
summer  
break

**Fall Crops-**  
Plant these in  
April/May

Carrots  
Potatoes  
Kale  
Corn  
Winter Squash  
Cabbage  
Dry Beans

**Plant these in  
July-Sep**

Beets  
Carrots  
Radishes  
Lettuce  
Cabbage  
Greens  
Broccoli  
Cauliflower

**YES**  
We have garden  
activities planned all  
summer

Plant any of the  
Spring/Fall crops

**And you can plant  
these Summer  
Crops in May/June**

Tomatoes  
Peppers  
Zucchini  
Cucumbers  
Green Beans  
Watermelon  
Pumpkins



## QUESTIONS?



Please contact Lyn Jenkins, Nutrition Education Specialist  
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# Partners

## –District Stakeholders

- Foodservice, Facilities, Curriculum, etc.

## –Community Stakeholders

- Gardening, nutrition education, etc.

